

## Soft and Hard Skills to Be Developed By a Pre-Service Teacher under Distance Learning: Case Study

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### Abstract

This article reflects on the development of soft and hard skills and their importance within the academic and educational course of students who study a degree in English as a foreign language under the distance modality. At the center of this study, the opinions of 46 students from various semesters underscore the fundamental role that the cultivation of these competencies plays in distance education. The qualitative approach and NVIVO software were used in a multiple case study to carry out axial coding. In this way, the information was classified into 6 categories, supported by the opinions provided by the survey participants: Personal Growth, Assertive Communication, Professional Enrichment, Digital Management, Pedagogical Confrontation, and English Proficiency. By analyzing the perspectives of these students, the research concludes that pre-service teachers have a valuable perspective on the development of competencies and recognize the integration of these competencies in their distance learning path, promoting personal and professional growth for their future roles.

**Key words:** soft and hard skills; English as a Foreign Language; pre-service teacher; distance learning.

### Introduction

Through the advancement and development of new technologies, numerous sectors of society have undergone modernization. Education is among the domains actively embracing this evolution (Gutierrez & Sanchez, 2022). Consequently, many students now can engage in distance learning modalities; however, it represents a challenge, as proficiency in specific skills is vital for optimal performance in such contexts, thereby enabling substantial personal and professional growth within this mode of training (Perez et al., 2022).

In Colombia, it is feasible to pursue a career through distance education, affording individuals the capacity to concurrently cultivate professional and economic trajectories. This is exemplified by undergraduate students opting to pursue English studies as a means of assimilating the global lingua franca and seamlessly transitioning from conventional schooling to online higher education. Simultaneously, students engage in occupational pursuits while actively participating in the pedagogical and developmental continuum (Alvarez, 2021).

Distance learning poses several challenges in the teacher training process, such as the acquisition of technological competencies, as it becomes essential in an increasingly digitized educational environment. In addition, the development of specific academic competencies, such as lesson planning and effective assessments, requires approaches and strategies adapted to the virtual and autonomous learning environment (Gomez & Castro, 2018). Likewise, the interpersonal aspect of teaching and interaction with students is also modified in the distance modality, which demands a reflective approach and the adoption of skills during the learning process (Cordova et al., 2018).

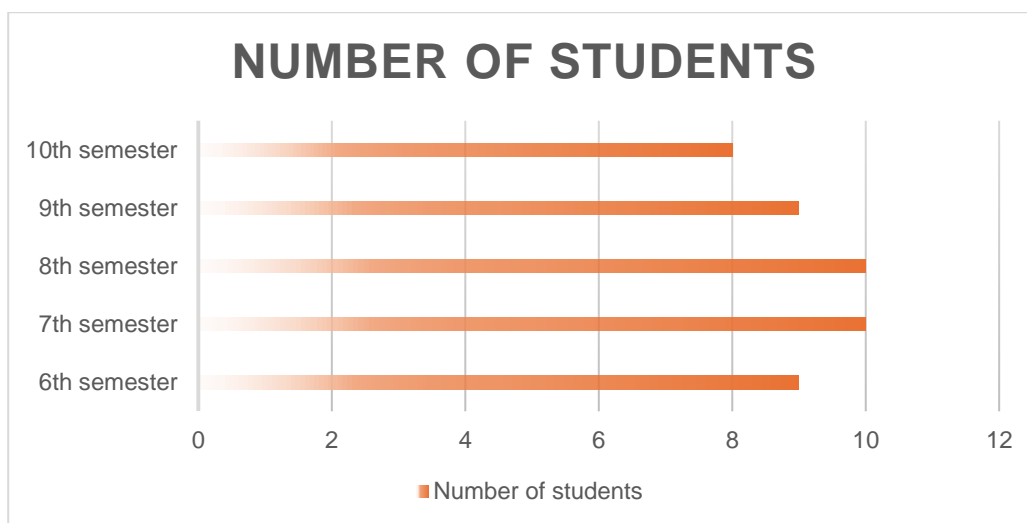
The present article arises from the context of the development of a degree that reflects the soft and hard skills that a student should have through distance education and learning a new language in this modality (Carrasco, 2015). The importance of the development of these competencies lies in that allow satisfaction

for the benefit of the learning agents because they manage to develop and enhance personal qualities, aspects such as adaptability to new situations that arise in the student and responsibility to meet the teaching objectives (Rodriguez et al., 2021). For this reason, this study aims to reflect on the soft and hard skills that need to be developed by a pre-service teacher under the Distance Learning Modality.

**Materials and methods**

**Participants and context**

This research focused on students enrolled in the bachelor’s degree in English as a Foreign Language in the distance mode at a private University in Colombia. The population were students from 5th to 10th grade, since through these levels of educational and formative experience, the process and development of specific skills from different personal and formative perspectives of each other can be evidenced. Thus, the total population was 96 students, however, data collection was extended until the responses began to be repeated, which was crucial to ensure a thorough and accurate understanding of the information available. In this sense, a representative sample of 46 students was selected (Graphic 1).



**Graphic 1.** Number of students who participate per semester.

**Design and instruments.**

This study was developed under the qualitative research approach (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014). The intention of using this method was to explore and reflect on the soft and hard skills that need to be developed by a pre-service teacher under the distance learning modality (Ahmad et al., 2019). The scope selected was descriptive since one of its implications is its ability to provide accurate and detailed descriptions of specific phenomena. The use of multiple case designs in this research has a significant influence on the understanding and analysis of complex phenomena in the context of distance teaching and learning of English as a foreign language (Halkias & Neubert, 2020).

**Type of Data**

Data was collected to allow the fulfillment of each of the specific objectives as steppingstones to the goal of the general objective (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Data collection

Specific Objectives	Data	Instrument
1. To identify the soft-hard competencies that the bachelor’s degree in English as a Foreign Language proposes that its students develop through the program	Qualitative	Curriculum Analysis Matrix
2. To analyze the English Foreign Language students' opinions about the development of soft and hard skills during their formative and academic process.	Qualitative	Survey
3. To systematize the English Foreign	Qualitative	Categorization of

Language students' opinions about the development of soft and hard skills and their importance during their formative and academic process.		collected data
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**Source:** Own elaboration

### Ethical Aspects

Regarding the ethical aspects, the first step was to request permission from the University to obtain consent for the application of instruments for the fulfillment of the objectives. Likewise, an informed consent form was sent to each of the participants in the research in which it was clear that their opinions and points of view would be anonymous and relevant to the data analysis of this research project. Finally, the instrument was sent for validation by experts. The data were manually coded inductively in this study. This means that the codes emerged during the analysis of the data and were then read and analyzed, coded, and categorized. NVivo data analysis software was also used to ratify the subcategories.

### Results

#### Curriculum Analysis Matrix

The data collection was based on the systematic compilation of the competencies established by the bachelor's degree program in English as a Foreign Language at a private University. These competencies were organized and presented in different fields or dimensions that cover various aspects of training. During this compilation process, identification categories were created to show the scope of each these competencies (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Scope Identification- Soft and hard skills

Skill	Category	Scope Identification
Soft skills	Personal Growth	It focuses on the development of self-efficacy and self-care as part of acquiring a greater knowledge of oneself, one's strengths and needs, and ethical thoughts, as fundamental tools for personal growth, the achievement of goals, and the improvement of quality of life in all aspects.
	Assertive Communication	It involves the development of competencies such as assertive communication, adaptation, mediation, and teamwork. The use of active listening, context review, empathy, paraphrasing, and reinforcement through questioning, thus allowing for the creation of a learning environment that contributes to a positive and enriching learning environment for language learners.
	Professional Enrichment	It focuses on enhancing the development of critical thinking skills, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation in teachers of English as a foreign language. Through this professional enrichment, teachers can improve their educational practice, adapt to the needs of their students, and provide quality and meaningful education that promotes deeper and more enriching learning.
	Digital Management	It focuses on the development of knowledge, skills, aptitudes, attitudes, and behaviors of pre-service teachers in English as a foreign language in the effective and responsible use of ICT, allowing them to design innovative and attractive educational experiences that integrate digital tools in the process of teaching and learning English.
	Pedagogical Confrontation	It focuses on the development of essential competencies that enable pre-service teachers to effectively face and

Hard skills		address the pedagogical challenges that arise in the educational context, promoting a reflective, proactive, and creative approach to their educational practice.
	English Proficiency	It involves the development of communicative competencies in the English language that facilitate effective communication and full understanding of educational activities. A comprehensive mastery of the skills of speaking, reading, listening, and writing in English that allows the pre-service teacher a productive means to carry out their future pedagogical work successfully.

**Source:** Own elaboration

Likewise, the relationship that was structured after reviewing each of the course plans of the degree is evident, and trying to connect what is projected with the scope of the categories with the competencies to be developed in each subject (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Dimensions and categories' connection according to the content expose in each subject.

Skills	Category	Dimensions				
		Humanistic	Research	Linguistic	Pedagogic	English
Soft skills	Personal Growth	X				
	Assertive Communication			X		X
	Professional Enrichment	X	X	X	X	
Hard skills	Digital Management	X				X
	Pedagogical Confrontation	X			X	
	English Proficiency			X		X

**Source:** own elaboration.

### **Humanistic Dimension/Field:**

The Humanistic Dimension leans towards the development of soft skills, since, what is evidenced is that it is essential to train empathetic, sensitive, and committed teachers with the well-being and integral development of their students. Likewise, this field focuses on the individuality of each student, promotes communication and respect in the classroom, fosters student autonomy, and values meaningful and relevant learning. Teachers in training acquire skills to support the academic and personal growth of their students, contributing to their personal development and to an enriching and meaningful educational experience. y as Data Collection Instrument.

### **Research Dimension/Field:**

The examination of the research dimension underscores its alignment with the cultivation of soft skills, resulting in notable contributions to both academic and professional growth. This is predominantly complemented by the application of English language proficiency (a hard skill), given that a significant portion of these pursuits is conducted in the target language. Consequently, it becomes manifestly clear that the established competencies seamlessly accommodate the nurturing of soft skills, facilitating the acquisition of research capabilities.

### **Linguistic Dimension/Field:**

The Linguistic Dimension is centered on the development of both soft and hard skills, synergistically complementing one another. This is notably demonstrated through a pronounced mastery of English, facilitated by competencies in assertive communication and critical sensitivity. Upon reviewing the

competencies within this domain, it becomes evident that students acquire robust knowledge in grammar and vocabulary, communicative skills, phonetics and pronunciation, methodological approaches for English teaching, language assessment, and intercultural awareness. As a result, they are equipped to cultivate abilities that contribute to effective English language instruction and facilitate meaningful learning experiences for their future students.

**Pedagogical Dimension/Field:**

There is a greater inclination towards the development of hard competencies since the development of the pedagogical field in English foreign language undergraduate students is essential to train competent and prepared teachers. Thus, through the analysis, it is evident that they acquire knowledge in theoretical foundations of education, skills in lesson planning and learning assessment, as well as strategies for the effective use of technology in the classroom. In addition, they develop skills in classroom management and discipline, which allows them to create a learning environment conducive to the academic and personal success of their future students.

**Specific Dimension/Field English:**

According to the results of this dimension, it is possible to identify that its development is centered on hard skills, through which its focus is the mastery of English through the skills of reading, speaking, writing, and listening. Likewise, on the other hand, grammatical and lexical competence plays an important role since it is proposed that students should acquire a solid knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary.

**Survey- Development of Soft and Hard Skills**

The process of creating the survey involved several key steps to ensure its effectiveness in obtaining relevant and meaningful data related to the definition of objectives, starting from the objective of the instrument that was to analyze the opinion of English Foreign Language learners on the development of soft and hard skills during their formative and academic process, the questions oriented to it were elaborated by the researchers. Being thus designed based on the analysis carried out in instrument 1 and through its categories, to disclose and meaningfully capture the scope of each of these, in which different types of questions were included to collect a variety of data, such as rating scales, open and closed questions.

The sample was questioned about the contributions that the University has made to their education process, the topics were related to the development of soft skills such as active listening, empathy, self-care and self-efficacy, personal development, mediation and problem-solving skills, ability to work as a team, critical thinking, strengths and needs, learning environment, innovation in the academic process as a foreign language teacher, professional enrichment and pedagogical development through the support and feedback of assigned tutors (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Perceptions of students relate to the contributions that the University has made to the students’ education process – soft skills development.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Deficient</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Develop skills such as active listening, empathy, self-care, and self-efficacy	6.5%	23.9%	45.7%	23.9%
Increase your personal development	2.2%	13%	50%	34.8%
Develop mediation and problem-solving skills	6.5%	26.1%	39.1%	28.3%
Improve your ability to work as a team	6.5%	19.6%	34.8%	39.1%
Deepen the development of critical thinking	4.3%	6.5%	43.5%	45.7%
See your strengths and needs to meet them	2.2%	26.1%	45.7%	26.1%
A learning environment that is enriching and positive	2.2%	17.4%	50%	30.4%

Innovation in your academic process as a foreign language teacher	4.3%	8.7%	39.1%	47.8%
Professional enrichment	2.2%	8.7%	45.7%	43.5%
Pedagogical development through the support and feedback of assigned tutors	6.5%	32.6%	32.6%	28.3%

Source: own elaboration

After that, the sample was questioned about the contributions that the University has made to their education process, the topics were related to the development of hard skills such as pedagogy to provide quality education, effective discourse as a teacher in the target language, knowledge and/or skills in the effective and responsible use of ICT, innovative educational experiences that integrate digital tools, pedagogical challenges faced, comprehensive command of English language skills, specific domain of written expression, listening Comprehension, oral expression, reading comprehension (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Perceptions of students relate to the contributions that the University has made to the students' education process – hard skills development.

Question	Deficient	Acceptable	Outstanding	Excellent
Promote skills that allow you to enrich your pedagogy to provide quality education.	2.2%	21.7%	50%	26.1%
Ability to develop effective discourse as a teacher in the target language.	4.3%	21.7%	56.5%	17.4%
Develop knowledge and/or skills in the effective and responsible use of ICT.	4.3%	10.9%	41.3%	43.5%
Design innovative educational experiences that integrate digital tools.	2.2%	17.4%	34.8%	45.7%
Pedagogical challenges faced.	6.5%	21.7%	52.2%	19.6%
Comprehensive command of English language skills.	4.3%	32.6%	41.3%	21.7%
Specific domain of written expression	4.3%	21.7%	54.3%	19.6%
Specific domain of Listening Comprehension	6.5%	21.7%	54.3%	17.4%
Specific domain of oral expression	4.3%	30.4%	47.8%	17.4%
Specific domain of Reading Comprehension	4.3%	13%	65.2%	17.4%

Source: own elaboration

### Discussion and conclusions

Through the analysis carried out and through the proposed categories, some subcategories emerge as analysis subcategories from the axial coding and from the coding carried out with NVivo (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Categories and subcategories defined.

Skill	Categories	Sub-categories
Soft skills	Personal Growth	Self-directed learning Academic and Personal Balance
	Assertive Communication	Humanization of the Teacher



		Communication Skills
	Professional Enrichment	Educational Experiences Institutional Support
Hard skills	Digital Management	Recognition of Potential Impact on English language learning and teaching
	Pedagogical Confrontation	Impact and value on teacher education Need for feedback. Vision for improvement Challenges and adjustments
	English Proficiency	Interaction and integrated skills development in the learning environment. Focus on specific skills.

**Source:** Own elaboration.

## **Personal Growth**

### **Self-directed learning**

This subcategory is significantly highlighted by the trainee teachers in the significant development of self-directed learning, through which aspects such as responsibility, appropriate time management and academic and personal development are promoted. In which, students highlight how the modality promotes autonomous and individual responsibility in the learning process, encouraging self-regulation and self-discipline, contributing significantly to their learning process, and promoting the formation of more autonomous and disciplined individuals.

Likewise, as Hernández (2021) calls "delivery methods" that contribute, as mentioned by Student 31, "personal enrichment is because it is a distance modality and that each student is autonomous, strengthening my discipline and organization by appropriating their knowledge and training". This reflects the fact that students being responsible for their own learning and actively taking ownership of their knowledge and training is a valuable aspect of these delivery methods. This reflection leads to an appreciation of how distance learning can have a profound impact on the way students engage with their education and take responsibility for their own personal and academic growth.

### **Academic and Personal Balance**

The analysis of these responses reveals a positive aspect of the academic and personal balance that is achieved through the distance learning degree in English (Viera et al., 2014). Students highlight several key aspects as it is generally mentioned that the training not only improves their academic skills, but also helps them to grow as individuals in terms of self-discipline, time management and organization, underlining how this modality promotes the acquisition of personal skills, such as resilience, balance between study and personal well-being, and the ability to manage responsibilities (De la Fuente et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the sample revealed that they feel more empowered and autonomous to manage their academic and personal responsibilities, which allows them to extend their learning beyond academics and to take time for extracurricular activities and personal enrichment. On the other hand, it is important to mention that it is highlighted by the participants how this modality also fosters collaboration and effective communication, which enriches the personal and social experience of the students (Gomez et al., 2023).

### **Assertive Communication**

#### **Humanization of the Teacher**

The trainee teachers mentioned that the degree has contributed to their knowledge and principles, highlighting that this not only focuses on academic skills but also on personal and ethical development, which denotes a higher level of empathy and interpersonal skills (Vieira & Correa, 2023). The importance of teaching good values and humanistic practices is notoriously complemented, as Student 23 stated "In my opinion, the subjects I have studied have contributed on a personal level in terms of my own knowledge. As I have studied the different subjects, I have expanded my knowledge a little more and the elements that make up the degree and how they help me to understand not only what I have to do as a teacher, but also to enrich myself ethically and understand that I am on the path I wish to follow".

Thus, training is not only limited to academic knowledge but also includes the development of human skills which, based on reflection and critical thinking, contribute to the ethical enrichment of teachers. On the other hand, the acquisition of greater cultural awareness as part of the training is highlighted in the appreciation of diversity and the importance of respecting differences, contributing to the training of teachers who are more humanized and aware of their role in society.

### **Communication Skills**

It is revealed how the Bachelor's degree program in English in which the students are involved has had a significant impact on the development of their communication skills, several of the responses obtained mention that through the Bachelor's degree program, they have developed essential skills for effective communication, The same is true for language skills and personal awareness, which are part of this training, as they allow students to get to know themselves and take care of themselves, and can influence how they communicate with others (Castro & Lopez, 2014).

Thus, in this sense, several of the soft skills mentioned by the students that encompass the development of assertive communication, such as empathy, teamwork, critical and effective thinking, and active listening, which shows the impact of acquiring these skills, as their contribution is not only relevant to their future role as teachers, but also has an impact on enriching their communication skills Tang (2018).

### **Professional Enrichment Educational Experiences**

The educational experience is evidenced in this subcategory as one of the most important and relevant factors in terms of the practical learning through which the undergraduate students face, who, based on their reflection and experience, state that they have learned through formative practice, which reflects that educational experiences provide them with concrete opportunities to apply what they have learned in real-world situations (Guerrero & Quintero, 2021).

Students highlight that the educational experiences have provided them with strategies that they can implement in their classrooms and the planning of topics. Contributing to how training goes beyond theory and prepares students to be effective teachers. Accordingly, it is highlighted that the production of individual and cooperative material is an important part of the educational experiences as this encourages personal responsibility and teamwork, problem solving, creativity, and innovation through which they can recognize the reality they may face, thus reflecting a focus on relevance and adaptation to the context (Terzi, 2022).

### **Institutional Support**

The analysis of the responses obtained in the subcategory of institutional support contributes to a vision in relation to the notorious commitment on the part of the university towards the integral growth of its students (Telles et al., 2019). The influence of the university on the educational experiences and the support of teachers and administrators in addressing personal and academic concerns and issues is highlighted. In this sense, the students reveal that the university provides a variety of resources, from tutorials to readings, which contribute to the professional enrichment of the students, through which they manage the resources provided effectively (Morales, 2016).

### **Digital Management Recognition of Potential**

Preservice teachers during their training process and adaptation to new learning environments revealed a consensus among them about the importance and benefits they perceive of digital tools. Firstly, the relevance of these tools for innovation in teaching is highlighted, with mentions of the need to implement innovative and creative strategies in all subjects According to students 7 '' In my academic experience I have been able to investigate various digital tools which I have been able to use in the work field, this due to the works that I have presented at the university and in which I have had a better handle on said tools''. Students recognize that these tools not only enrich the way in which content is presented but also allow them to approach information in a didactic and effective way (Suarez & Basto, 2017).

In fact, student 23 mentioned that "this modality quickly encourages us to use these tools, because, from the classes taught by teachers to the classes we have to create using and managing them, digital tools offer a wide range of possibilities for designing innovative and attractive educational experiences in the teaching



and learning of English". Thus, contrasting this opinion, most of the students express that they have grown and have been significantly trained in the use of digital tools through this modality, which has been crucial in a world where ICT is essential.

### **Impact On English Language Learning and Teaching**

The impact of English language learning and teaching through digital tools manages to evidence an important contribution in this process, as it is revealed through these, their influence and how these technologies influence the educational process (Fernandez et al., 2019). Firstly, the importance of adapting learning to the needs of the environment is highlighted, which reflects an awareness of the relevance of contextualized education as it is mentioned by Student 22 "I believe that using educational materials in English, such as academic articles, videos, and books, contribute to deepening pedagogical topics and improving vocabulary and reading comprehension. Likewise, the development of Teaching Materials, creating teaching materials in English, such as lesson plans, activities, and multimedia resources, to practice written expression and the use of educational language".

Secondly, most students mention that digital tools make learning more interactive and engaging. This demonstrates how these technologies can enhance students' motivation and personalize the learning experience, which is essential in a diverse educational environment, as it is mentioned by Student 9 "Technology facilitates many things, such as games that are implemented in the classroom, to generate a more pleasant school environment for the student".

Likewise, it is observed through the students' perceptions that teachers play a key role in proposing activities that involve the use of digital tools, indicating that the effective integration of technology in the classroom contributes to the development of creative activities to make learning less tedious and more engaging, as it is mentioned by Student 22 "Teachers always propose activities that include the use of digital tools, in which some pages are suggested".

### **Pedagogical Confrontation**

#### **Impact and Assessment in Teacher Training**

Students express that these practices are essential for their professional growth and provide them with valuable tools for their future teaching work. Firstly, it is highlighted that pedagogical practices provide opportunities to put into practice what they have learned in theory, which allows them to better understand the reality of the classroom and the challenges they will face as teachers, thus contributing to their process and to a more complete and contextualized training.

According to Student 32 "They are essential to prepare future educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to be effective teachers and adapt to a constantly changing educational environment and meet the challenges of education" which shows how the students highlight that the practices allow them to reflect and learn actively. Observing classes, interacting with students, and receiving feedback helps them to improve their teaching and adapt to different contexts and needs and this is supported by the author Goegan et. al, (2020) who, in mentioning this, states that this is an element of great relevance as it enables them to exert a positive influence on both student performance and the overall effectiveness of the educational institution. Thus, the formative process of a trainee teacher plays a critical role in shaping the educational experience of their students through context.

#### **Need for Feedback**

Students take a positive approach to the feedback they receive from their teachers. Most participants consider it beneficial and necessary for their continuous improvement as students appreciate that feedback helps them to improve and understand how they are performing. They see feedback as a tool to identify areas for improvement and to progress in their learning and training process, as it is mentioned by Student 24 "I think it is enriching, since we can see the pedagogy we have beyond our perspective, critically and constructively receiving other points of view that contribute to our process as teachers in training".

On the other hand, although some of the students express the need for broader and deeper feedback, they value the feedback they receive because they feel it could be more detailed and cover additional aspects. It is also recognized that, given the workloads and the number of students and subjects teachers must handle, the depth of feedback may be limited, as it is mentioned by Student 3 "I think the feedback should be broader.

But I also understand that many times the university burdens teachers with a lot of work, making it difficult in terms of time, number of students and subjects to provide more in-depth feedback''.

### **Vision for Improvement**

Feedback is seen as a point of value in the training process, as has already been shown above. This subcategory focuses on the perspectives of the students, who consider that it is part of a vision for improvement, as it is part of their training process to feed themselves cognitively and professionally with constructive criticism that allows them to approach and advance their teacher training since it is highlighted that feedback is seen as an opportunity for improvement through which teachers' suggestions are valued as tools for correcting errors and progressing in their training process (Mendez, 2020).

### **Challenges and Adjustments**

Through the reading and analysis of data for this subcategory, the importance of mentioning the perspective of the students who showed a critical inclination towards the development of teaching practices became evident, in which one of the students pointed out that the current pedagogical practices are not sufficient to adequately prepare future teachers to face a real classroom. This shows that there is a need to review and improve the focus of these practices to make them more effective in teacher training.

On the other hand, it was pointed out by some of the participants that "some pedagogical practices are not adequately preparing future teachers to face the challenges related to the inclusion of students with different abilities"(student 41), which is an important issue in education that deserves attention and action as teacher preparation should focus on effective inclusion, and teachers should be preparing and growing in this aspect to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and develop in an inclusive educational environment.

### **English Proficiency**

#### **Interaction and Integrated Skills Development in the Learning Environment**

The analysis of this subcategory reveals a variety of opinions and experiences of the participants in relation to the skills and activities that contribute to English language proficiency. Whereby, its general focus is on the integrated development of the 4 skills for English language proficiency (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) as many participants emphasize that all skills are essential and interconnected. They stress that they cannot be separated and that a holistic approach is necessary for full English language proficiency (Hao, 2022).

Therefore, interaction and holistic development in the learning environment for English language proficiency involves a combination of the development of these and some activities and approaches that participants have found to be of great importance to their process, such as the educational resources and pedagogical strategies provided in the online practice, of which the students highlight the usefulness of the online practices and resources, both the classes as part of the interaction, creation of classes, to the "Macmillan" book page, which contribute to integrate the improvement of English skills, thus reflecting the growing importance of the development of these in the mastery of the English language through technology in education.

#### **Focus on Specific Skills**

From the analysis of this subcategory, the participants reveal an inclination from their perspective on the importance of focusing on specific skills for the mastery of English. Firstly, the emphasis on writing skills is considered by the participants to be a fundamental aspect of learning English, as they argue that writing requires research and information seeking, which promotes a better understanding of the language and teaching practice.

On the other hand, the importance of speaking is highlighted as an essential skill for both professional success and effective communication, highlighting in general that teachers need to master this skill to teach in English and transmit knowledge clearly and effectively, as well as to establish social relationships. Thirdly, in the focus on the skill of Reading, Reading is mentioned as a promoter of familiarization with English spelling, grammar, and vocabulary, which in their view contributes to language proficiency.

Finally, the importance of listening skills is directly related to speaking skills, to the focus of the teaching role and to assertive and effective communication. Thus, this subcategory shows that, although the opinions of the participants reveal different perspectives on which skills are most important in teaching practice, there is a consensus that they all stem from constant practice, the support of teachers, and the use of educational resources as key elements in the development of these skills in the educational and teaching context, and thus this influence transcends the limits of the classroom, contributing to shaping a more effective and enriching learning experience (Pabón et al., 2023).

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